

Minutes of the March 14, 2008 Southeast Regional Council meeting

Attending: Lou Sansevero, Norman Johnson, Denim Lyman, Tauna Bruno, Kate Alleman, Ken Davey, Claudia Berner, William Harrison, Al Shakespeare, Cari Caylor, Richard Root, Bob Topping, Miles Nelson, Steven Burge, Deb Dull, Pamela Juliano, DeLynn Fielding, Nancy Bentley

Staff: Kelly Thornton, Delena Fish, Leland Begaye, Susan Etzel, Katie Hanway, Bob Gilbert, Clistie Tucker, Trish West

Guests: Winston Inoway, Kim Palmer, Jody Stanback

Lou welcomed everyone. Introduced new members: Tauna Bruno, SOS Staffing and Al Sheakespeare, Emery County Nursing Home

Norman moved approval of minutes. Second by Richard Root.

Pam introduced the IRS Field staff, Mr. Jodi Stamback. He said he is from constituent services within the IRS. He provided his phone number: (801-799-6852) and encouraged employers to call him with questions. He talked about the IRS programs for small business. As part of his job, he meets with industry groups in Utah, and can help with system issues or finding the right people within IRS. Jodi then discussed the difference between working for an employer vs. an independent contractor. Some employers that designate an employee as an independent contractor are trying to avoid taxes. It is important to meet the definition of an independent contractor. If you are not sure, you may file an S8 form. A car salesman is an example where the salesman is actually an employee, not an independent contractor. This example is from a recent court decision.

Jodi said that stimulus payments are coming. Most Council members had heard of them. Jodi said that children under 17 won't get \$300. If they are over 17, they will get their own check. Richard asked about the relief provisions for business. Jodi said it would allow for faster tax writeoffs. The stimulus payments are based on the filing of your 2007 returns, and will not affect your 2008 tax refund. Will be issued to early filers in May or June.

Jodi said the IRS website (www.irs.gov) is a wonderful resource. Has tabs for businesses where they can order forms, ask questions, apply for IEN, etc. Technology is coming along slowly for IRS – lots of changes are needed. Jody distributed some information for 501c3s. Most brochures are available in different languages. Encouraged the use of electronic means for rural users.

Kim Palmer said that there is a lot of activity between Montezuma Creek and Blanding. Leland said the primary company there is Resolute Resources – now have 70 employees. Producing 10,300 bpd, and 3.5 mcf of natural gas. The product is being shipped to Farmington. There are ten local contractors working there laying co2 lines and other projects. Looking for welders. Kim is just starting a welding class – is being deluged by applicants. Want to utilize local residents for workers as much as possible. Leland wanted to invite some from Resolute to attend the Energy Task Force meetings.

Susan and Bob T. reported about the Energy Task Force. Right now, the Statewide Energy Task Force is putting together project plans for the deliverables. Will be meeting at the Gadsby Plant in SLC on May 13th and are actively recruiting more industry to attend. Making progress on marketing and community impacts. Looking at how in southeast counties we can attract talent and people. Where are we vulnerable and how can we impact that? Steve said the group ought to take the position of strongly supporting open enrollment to meet the needs of the industry. Training needs to be flexible. All companies are minimally staffed – need to take the training to them and meet their time schedules. There is also a need to work with schools to begin to develop workers with skills. Bob described a big Florida utility that currently needs 3500 workers. Will be trying to steal them from anywhere. He reported that half of our women PhD's are leaving the state. Engineers, too. We need to nurture and retain the talent here. Also need to attract new talent. May be a place for 60-70 year olds in the workplace. Need to attract, retain and advance.

Winston Inoway, Communications Division, Marketing

Winston began by saying said that the four sectors did their workgroups in Cedar City, and a common strategy for each was to do a marketing plan. Winston is visiting the Regional councils as they are charged to implement the sector plans. Will probably take 12-18 months to complete. The task forces includes both DWS and State Office of Education. Any marketing plan will match up with the career pathways. There will be a common theme for all sectors: “We Need You”, with some tailoring. Winston has met with all of the sectors – trying to get from them what needs to be communicated, and what needs to happen with Regional Councils. Is meeting now with Regional Councils, finding out what Councils want to do and what communications needs are. Next step will be to develop targeted audiences and specific message. Winston is meeting next month with the State Council, and wants to present a preliminary draft to them. Will be identifying what type of marketing materials will be most useful for each sector, and setting up a website, probably connected with the DWS website, that will have downloadable pieces. Will try to use mass production, to be cost effective, where feasible.

Steve said the main topic of the Energy Systems Group today was the action plan for the Energy Sector Taskforce.

Norm reported on the Youth Council. Revised the threshold number of points required for service from 8 to 12. Wanted to focus the funds on serving fewer youth, as there will be fewer dollars. Invited some education professionals together to talk about basic education and better connecting with adult ed students. Assignment was for each county to have a discussion on how to better serve those who are dropping out or adult ed students/programs. They will report back next meeting.

Al Shakespeare, new Healthcare Task Force chair, reported on the Healthcare Task Force. The main discussion centered on how the nursing programs were doing in the southeast counties. Was a shortage of CNAs in all the healthcare institutions. There is not a nursing shortage right now for southeast – CEU produces nearly 60 LPNs and 50 RNs a year, counting both the Blanding and Price programs. The statewide task force is meeting on April 7 in Vernal and in June in Blanding. Want to develop some solutions to healthcare issues. CNAs are required to have high school diploma, pass a background check, and can work while in high school. Must be able to pass certification and then can work under the nurse's license. Why the shortage? Al said they enjoy the work, and end up moving onto the LPN, or other medical programs.

Gerald Gappmayer, new Region Program Manager, gave the Director's report: The Region has made some changes: Leland is the new manager of the Blanding Office, Katie is the new manager for Moab, and Gerald is the new Program Manager. He reviewed the performance measures for DWS by region. Gerald said that the federal government rescinded \$2.1 million of WIA funding, which means fewer dollars to spend on customers. We have some new allocations that are coming in July, but not sure of how much. Had to reduce WIA funding availability for each WIA and FEP customer from \$6000 to \$4000.

The department is looking at Kaizen process – looking at efficiencies. The exercise is to identify value-added processes and eliminate those that are unnecessary. For instance 1/3 of customers never get past the interview process. Maybe we could screen better initially. Also, workers will be asked to take a more proactive process to prevent cases from closing.

Employment Center Reports

Katie: We received an update on the tailings removal project a couple of days ago. Omnibus bill set \$24 million for tailings removal. Energy Solutions, contractor, said that either truck or rail can be used to haul the tailings. Trucking is less expensive, at least to begin with. Dept of Labor is considering 7 options, and will hold a public meeting to discuss them. Also, the contractor is developing water resources at Crescent Junction, and wants to improve road. Tailings Removal Project would provide 70 truck driving jobs. Lisbon Valley mining laid off 100 employees in January. Since then, DWS has sponsored a job fair and layoff workshops for the workers. Helped with: the filing of unemployment, locating training opportunities, some job search and layoff assistance. Participated in community job fair and want to improve access to services.

Susan: Sorenson Communications is coming in. A new building is under construction. This is as a result of the Roots and Boots promotion. MSHA is opening an office.

Delena: There is a new restaurant in Emery County under the direction of Dave Robinson. New industrial development in Green River is proposed. It would have all infrastructure needed – could be a desired location. One that may come in is a landfill-type operation. There are still some issues from the Crandall Mine disaster surface. Could be sold, and other rumors.

Leland: The uranium industry is hiring processors and mill mechanics. Mining is starting up and will require more drivers. The George Wythe college is starting up in Monticello. Timothy Chamberlain will be the new president of Rotary – they do some good public projects, including providing dictionaries for all third graders. Having a bicycle-riding activity to raise some funds for autism and autism awareness. Tessahope.org is the website. Biofuel project facility will be located near Duck Creek.

Sen. Bennett's conference is on March 25-26th in Price. WETC Safety fest is on March 25-26.

Rep. Matheson will be in Price next Tuesday, at 12:30 pm at the SEAOG in Price. Then to Emery County to tour the former DBT facility. Employs 82. Will also meet at 5:00 pm with Veterans and talk about veterans issues. Then will hold a forum in the evening on affordable housing at 8:30 pm in Price. Held a town hall meeting electronically.

Next meeting is set for June 20th.